(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) is delaying the completion of Paradeep Oil Refinery; and

(b) what is the total Budget Estimate funds already utilised and the time-frame to complete the work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) No, Sir. Paradip Refinery Project is progressing as per the revised schedule.

(b) As on 30.11.2008, an amount of Rs.1461.21 crore has been spent on the Paradip Refinery Project. The Paradip Refinery Project is scheduled to be completed by July, 2012.

CNG retail outlet in Assam

2441. KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the automobile users of Assam are consuming Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) for their vehicles;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has any proposal for starting Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) retail outlets in Assam;

(d) if so, by when it will be started; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. At present, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) is operating four auto LPG dispensing stations (ALDS) in the State of Assam at Guwahati (2 Nos), Tinsukia (1 No.) and Jorhat (1 No.).

Government have permitted the sale of auto-LPG for vehicles*vide* Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of use in Motor Vehicle) Order, 2001. As per the Control Order, only imported or import-substituted auto LPG can be used in vehicles.

(c) to (e) As of now, there is no Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) station in any city of Assam. In order to promote investment from public as well as private sector for laying trunk natural gas pipelines and city/local natural gas distribution networks throughout the country, the Government of India has enacted 'The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006' and notified the 'Policy for Development of Natural Gas Pipelines and City or Local Natural Gas Distribution Networks'. Providing of CNG facilities depends upon availability of gas, setting up necessary infrastructure and economic viability.

New LPG connections

2442. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) has stopped giving new LPG connections due to cash crunch to procure new cylinders and equipments;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government owed oil companies crores of rupees on account of unpaid subsidy bills; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has not stopped the release of new LPG connections. New LPG connections are made available as soon as possible and in any case, within a period of sixty days. At present, new LPG connections are available for genuine domestic customers. As on 01.12.2008, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are serving 1042.2 lakh LPG customers in the country, covering 53.8% of households as per 2001 Census, Out of which IOC is serving 518.7 lakh LPG customers. OMCs have also reported that they have released 31.28 lakh new LPG connections in the country during the period April-November, 2008, out of which IOC has released 15.42 lakh LPG connections.

(c) and (d) Government had decided to issue bonds worth Rs. 35,289.50 crores to OMCs in respect of expected losses/under-realization for marketing sensitive petroleum products for the financial year 2007-08.

Further, Government decided to issue bonds worth Rs. 44,967 crores to OMCs in respect of under-realisation on marketing sensitive petroleum products for the first half of the year 2008-09.

Out of the total outstanding Bonds for Rs. 59,923.17 crores (including Bonds of Rs. 14,956.17 crores for the 4th quarter of 2007-08), Bonds for Rs. 22,000 crores were issued to the OMCs in November, 2008.

In addition to above, Government provides a fixed rate of subsidy from the Budget on domestic LPG and PDS kerosene. A provision for Rs. 2700 crore towards this subsidy has been made in the Budget for 2008-09.

Refining cost of oil

2443. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per his Ministry's statement to recover Rs. 2,45,000 crore, petrol has to be priced at Rs. 71 per litre *i.e.* 256 dollars per barrel;

(b) wherefrom this figure was discovered that for refining one barrel of crude oil, which is costing 130 dollars, another 126 (256-130) dollar would be required for refining the same in our own refineries and marketing the same at the retail; and